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Security and resilience — Community resilience — Guidelines for conducting peer reviews

Sécurité et résilience — Résilience des communautés — Lignes directrices pour mener des examens par des pairs

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Foreword

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The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see www.iso.org/patents).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

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This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 292, *Security and resilience*.

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Introduction

A peer review to enhance community resilience is a unique and privileged opportunity for a host country, region, city or community to engage in a constructive process to reflect on its activities with a team of independent professionals, e.g. on disaster risk reduction (DRR). It encourages conversations, promotes the exchange of good practice, and examines the performance of the entity being reviewed to enhance mutual learning and so can be of value to those who seek to further develop their practices. It can enhance preparedness for an incident and support learning from incidents and exercises. It is different to an audit in that a peer review may be optional, and an organization can design it according to its needs.

A peer review can be a catalyst for change and can enrich learning through bringing together a multi-disciplinary panel of trusted and competent experts from a range of technical, political and cultural backgrounds to concentrate on the host's situation. In the most beneficial peer reviews, both the host and the reviewers benefit by collecting and analysing the latest intelligence (understanding and information about the context), discussing the current situation, generating ideas, and exploring new opportunities to further strengthen activities in their own context. Mutual learning is facilitated by sharing good practice, identifying alternative approaches to policy and operations, and exploring critical questioning to consider how similar challenges are confronted elsewhere. Trusted relationships can form that can facilitate the development of innovative solutions to challenges.

These benefits are one reason why conducting peer reviews is consistent with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030[7] and its global target to have more countries with national and local strategies for DRR by 2020. Conducting peer reviews to enhance DRR also complements the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 11 to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable[4], as it seeks to align entities through an integrated approach and sharing learning and benchmark information between hosts and reviewers. The guidelines in this document can also contribute to enhancing resilience and risk reduction.

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The entities that can benefit from peer reviews include national, regional, local and organizational levels of governance, which may voluntarily engage with a peer review, or do so as part of a wider initiative of improvement. The peer review process for enhancing community resilience described in this document is not intended to be used as means for comparing one entity with another. Instead, it encourages cross-border cooperation to understand and improve performance. Since every host and team of reviewers are different, the outcome of each review will be too. The key to success is having one question at the forefront of the peer review: What will most help us all to enhance our performance?

Figure 1 provides an overview of how to conduct a peer review.

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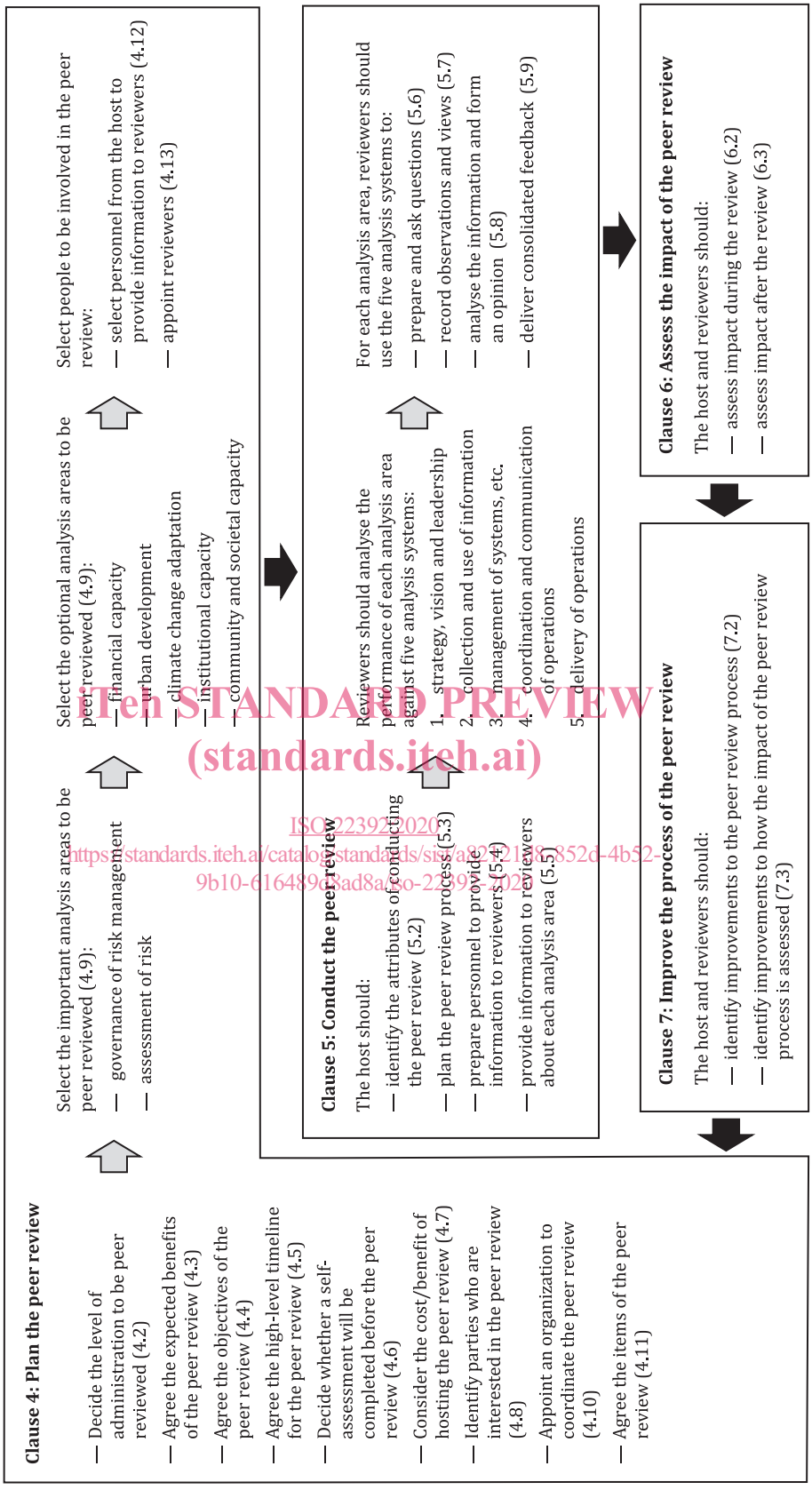

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Figure 1 — Overview of the process to conduct a peer review

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Security and resilience — Community resilience — Guidelines for conducting peer reviews

1 Scope

This document gives guidelines for organizations to design, organize, conduct, receive feedback from and learn from a peer review of their disaster risk reduction (DRR) policies and practices. It is also applicable to other community resilience activities. It is intended for use by organizations with the responsibility for, or involvement in, managing such activities including policy and preparedness, response and recovery operations, and designing preventative measures (e.g. for the effects of environmental changes such as those from climate change).

It is applicable to all types, structures and sizes of organizations, such as local, regional and national governments, statutory bodies, non-governmental organizations, businesses, and public and community groups. It is applicable before or after an incident or exercise.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

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3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 22300 and the following apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at https://www.iso.org/obp

— IEC Electropedia: available at http://www.electropedia.org/

3.1
peer review
process used by a *reviewer* (3.3) to examine the performance of a *host* (3.2), provide feedback on an *analysis area* (3.4) and learn lessons that are transferable to its own context

Note 1 to entry: A peer review may cover multiple analysis areas.

Note 2 to entry: The host may replace "review" with a synonym such as "assessment", "appraisal" or "analysis" to better describe the activity.

3.2
host
entity that receives feedback from a *reviewer* (3.3) as part of a *peer review* (3.1)

Note 1 to entry: The entity may be an organization, partnership, community, city, region, country or other body.

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3.3
reviewer
entity that provides feedback as part of a *peer review* (3.1) with expert knowledge and experience in the *analysis area* (3.4)

Note 1 to entry: The entity may be an organization, partnership, community, city, region, country or other body.

3.4
analysis area
subject matter that has been selected to be *peer reviewed* (3.1)

EXAMPLE Governance of risk management, assessment of risk, financial capacity, urban development, climate change adaptation and ecosystem protection, institutional capacity, community and societal capacity, economic and business continuity, infrastructure, public health, recovering and rebuilding.

3.5
analysis system
set of interconnecting parts that work together to form and deliver an *analysis area* (3.4)

3.6
review visit
participation by *reviewers* (3.3) in *peer review* (3.1) activities at the *host* (3.2) location(s)

Note 1 to entry: Review visit activities include presentations, individual interviews, focus groups, site visits, and the observation of live and table-top exercises.

3.7
benefit
measurable improvement resulting from the changes introduced as a result of a *peer review* (3.1)

Note 1 to entry: Benefits can be tangible or intangible, quantifiable or non-quantifiable, and financial or non-financial.

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4 Plan the peer review

4.1 General

It is important that the host plans effectively for the peer review so that its delivery (see Clause 5) is successful. Planning the peer review will put in place the arrangements so that the reviewers have a maximum clarity of purpose from the host, and vice versa.

This clause describes planning for the peer review, including to:

— decide the level of administration to be peer reviewed (see 4.2);

— agree the expected benefits of the peer review (see 4.3);

— agree the objectives of the peer review (see 4.4);

— agree the high-level timeline for the peer review (see 4.5);

— decide whether a self-assessment will be completed before the peer review (see 4.6);

— consider the cost/benefit of hosting the peer review (see 4.7);

— identify parties who are interested in the peer review (see 4.8);

— select the analysis areas to be peer reviewed (see 4.9);

— appoint an organization to coordinate the peer review (see 4.10);

— agree the terms of the peer review (see 4.11);

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— select personnel from the host to provide information to the reviewers (see 4.12);

— appoint reviewers (4.13).

4.2 Decide the level of administration to be peer reviewed

Peer reviews can be an effective approach to reflect on the activities being conducted at any level of administration. The host should decide whether the peer review should focus on the national, regional, local or organizational levels.

More than one level of administration may be the focus of the peer review, in which case, the amount of time available for the peer review should be increased to reflect the added complexity.

4.3 Agree the expected benefits of the peer review

The peer review should have expected benefits for the host and for reviewers and these should be agreed before organizing the peer review to provide clear expected impacts from the outcomes of the review.

There should be expected benefits for each selected analysis area (see 4.9) to ensure clarity of the measurable improvement being sought.

The host and reviewers should define each of their expected benefits. This should:

— agree with their interested parties the benefits they expect from participating in the review (e.g. benefits to their performance, analysis areas, or other benefits such as learning or networking);

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— describe each benefit and identify the benefit owner who is responsible for it (i.e. who will: plan the timing of changes to deliver the benefit; prepare the context for the changes; implement the changes; manage the changes to avoid negative side-effects);

— define the objectives (see 4.4) that support each benefit;

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— identify a measure of each benefit, including a current value for the measure and a target change in the value as a result of the peer review; if a benefit is not measurable directly, then a proxy measure should be identified;

— communicate information on benefits to each other (i.e. the reviewers should communicate their expectations to the host, and vice versa);

— consider these expectations when planning the peer review process (see 5.3) to ensure all expectations are addressed.

4.4 Agree the objectives of the peer review

The host should agree clear objectives for the peer review in terms of how it will deliver the benefits (see 4.3) and strengthen its performance in selected analysis areas (see 4.9). Objectives should include how the peer review should enhance analysis areas in terms of:

— strategy, vision and leadership; this should include developing the culture and strategies;

— collection and use of information; this should include developing the analyses of external and internal data and information, building strategic collaborations, exploring the wider environment, and foreseeing future risks;

— management of systems, processes, planning and audits; this should include developing the management structure, planning processes, sustainable resource management, analysing corporate risks, functions that support operational delivery, business continuity, performance measurement, external audits, and learning from itself and others;

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— coordination of, and communication with, operations; this should include developing the coordination of resources and partners, sharing information effectively internally and externally, and notifying senior leaders when situations change with significant implications;

— delivery of operations; this should include developing the structure of delivering operations, managing effective and efficient on-site delivery, autonomy of delivery units, and adapting to feedback from beneficiaries and other interested parties during operational delivery.

These elements are the five analysis systems, which are used in 5.5.1 to review the performance of each analysis area.

4.5 Agree the high-level timeline for the peer review

To enable initial planning, the host should agree an anticipated timeline for the delivery of the peer review, including:

— the official start date of the peer review period;

— when the review visit should take place;

— the delivery date of the consolidated report from the reviewers (see 5.9).

A detailed timeline should be developed in the delivery phase of the peer review, see Annex A.

4.6 Decide whether a self-assessment will be completed before the peer review

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The host should consider whether they will complete a self-assessment as a preparation for the peer review. Options for a self-assessment include a document review (e.g. of risk register, strategy, plans), internal dialogues (e.g. discussions between staff and interested parties), and self-evaluation of current performance and costs.

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A self-assessment takes time and effort, but its potential benefits include:

— enabling the host to gather evidence of activities in a structured way;

— enabling the host to establish its own view of its activities;

— providing benchmarks for the peer review;

— informing the selection of benefits and measures of the peer review (see 4.3);

— assisting in selecting analysis areas that would be most beneficial to be peer reviewed;

— providing additional information to reviewers as part of background information.

An option for self-assessment is the UNISDR *Preliminary Disaster Resilience Scorecard for Cities*[6].

4.7 Consider the cost/benefit of hosting the peer review

The host should consider the cost of conducting the peer review (e.g. travel costs, meeting costs, administration costs, opportunity costs). As the initiator of the review and the major beneficiary, the host should expect to pay all costs associated with the review unless another source of funding is available.

Using information on the costs and the benefits (see 4.3) of the review, the host should assess if there is a sufficient return on investment from conducting the peer review. The assessment should be used to:

— judge the case for conducting the peer review;

— judge the case for the scale of the peer review;

— calibrate the breadth and depth of the peer review to ensure a sufficient return on investment.

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4.8 Identify parties who are interested in the peer review

The host should identify organizations and individuals, groups and partners with an interest in the process or outcome of the peer review to consider if they should be involved in the design and delivery of the review. The host should:

— identify parties with an interest in enhancing performance (e.g. elected officials, those indirectly or directly affected by the review, those wishing to learn from the review, citizens and their representatives);

— consider the implications of involving or not involving interested parties in the peer review process;

— decide if and how interested parties should be involved in the peer review process;

— review who are the important interested parties once the analysis areas have been selected (see 4.9).

Examples of interested party groups include government officials, responders, private sector staff, academics, citizens, citizen representatives and elected officials.

4.9 Select the analysis areas to be peer reviewed

With the influential interested parties (see 4.8) and, potentially, the reviewers (see 4.13) and, if conducted, using the results of the self-assessment (see 4.6), the host should select the analysis areas to be reviewed according to its preferences and the agreed objectives (see 4.4). See Annex B for potential analysis areas. As each analysis area is estimated to take one day of a review visit (plus activities before the visit), the host should decide on the number, depth and specificity of the analysis areas to be reviewed.

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Risk management and assessment of risk are two important analysis areas that should be included in every peer review to provide sufficient background information to reviewers. If these two analysis areas are not included, then information of sufficient detail on these topics should be provided to reviewers.

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The host should select the analysis areas to be reviewed. Descriptions of the options are provided in Annex B. The selection of analysis areas will depend on the duration of the review visit. Some analysis areas are of a strategic nature while others are operational.

Not every peer review should cover all the analysis areas in Annex B. In addition to those in Annex B, the host should consider if there are any other analysis areas that should be reviewed. The design of those should follow those outlined in Annex B.

4.10 Appoint an organization to coordinate the peer review

Once the interested parties (see 4.8), benefits (see 4.3) and objectives (see 4.4) have been identified, the host should appoint an organization to coordinate the peer review, including to:

— project-manage the delivery of the peer review to achieve the objectives of the review and support the benefit owners;

— conduct the administrative arrangements of the peer review for the host and reviewers.

4.11 Agree the terms of the peer review

Before appointing reviewers, the host and reviewers should clarify the expectations and process of the review including the details in 4.2 to 4.10.

It can be necessary to record the terms in a formal contract that has been developed with legal support. This can include:

— agreed terms of the peer review;

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